

Notic of Allowability

Application No.

10/622,446

Examiner

Michael P. Ferguson

Applicant(s)

TUC ET AL.

Art Unit

3679

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to 28 March 2006 amendment, 06 April 2006 interview.

2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1,2,4,5 and 7-16.

3. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:

1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.

5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.

(a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached

1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.

(b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).

6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____

4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material

5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6. ☒ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date 04/06/06.

7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment

8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance

9. ☐ Other _____.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Daniel A. Tanner, III on April 6, 2006.

The application has been amended as follows:

In claim 1, in line 10 after "the fixing elements being disposed" deleted "on either side" and replaced with --on opposing sides--.

In claim 1, in line 13 after "fixing element comprising" deleted "this" and replaced with --the--.

In claim 7, in line 3 after "shank of a screw" deleted "co-operating" and replaced with --cooperating--.

In claim 15, in line 8 after "the fixing elements being disposed entirely" deleted "on either side" and replaced with --on opposing sides--.

In claim 15, in line 11 after "fixing element comprising" deleted "this" and replaced with --the--.

In claim 16, in line 8 after "the fixing elements being situated" deleted "on either side" and replaced with --on opposing sides--.

In claim 16, in line 13 after "fixing element comprising" deleted "this" and replaced with --the--.

2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

As to claims 1, 11, 15 and 16, Papayoti (US 3,415,554) discloses the claimed assembly with the exception of each fixing tab being configured in such a manner that, when it is inserted in the corresponding slot of the tubular element, the fixing element comprising the tab can pivot relative to the tubular element, between a first position, in which the fixing element is angularly spaced apart from the panel which is positioned against the other fixing element, and a second position, in which the fixing element bears against the panel; and each fixing tab having a bearing surface suitable for bearing against one inside wall of the tubular element, in such a manner that the fixing tab can engage in the slot only in the first position, and that the assembly is locked in the second position.

There is no teaching or suggestion, absent the applicants' own disclosure, for one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the assembly as disclosed by Papayoti to have the above mentioned elements.


Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Michael P. Ferguson whose telephone number is (571)272-7081. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (8:00-5:00).

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Daniel P. Stodola can be reached on (571)272-7087. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


MPF
04/06/06



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